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East Timor diplomatic & intelligence digest

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Comissão Directiva da FRETILIN • Comando das FALINTIL • Resistência Nacional Estudantil de Timor Leste - RENETIL

Update on East Timor at the UNCHR

1. Australian diplomats have told people the following;

: That Indonesia has responded satisfactorily to the demands for an investigation and punished those responsible for the massacre.

: That the Commission for Human Rights should not adopt a strong resolution because it would be counter-productive and would only strengthen the position of the hard-liners.

2. We have circulated a draft resolution which provides a strong basis for bargaining. The Portuguese have incorporated the fundamental elements of this into their draft without substantial changes. The same has been approved at the top level in Portugal.

3. This draft is now the subject of discussion within the European Community. The Portuguese met with the EC on Feb. 12 specifically to discuss the East Timor resolution. There were comments on it, but no immediate adverse reaction at this meeting.

4. The U.S., Australia, the Dutch and the U.K. continue to work against us.

5. The East Timorese lobby has so far concentrated much of its work on the African Group. We believe that this is crucial due to the following:

: In light of their previous support for East Timor in the General Assembly on the grounds of the inviolability of colonial boundaries, upon which we can pressure them for support.

: It is crucial that we prevent the Asian bloc from forming a pact with the African Group, which would in effect present a combined Afro-Asia front in which Indonesia could block anything it wanted to at this Commission.

Address:

: We have also met with several Latin American delegations, some EC, and the Scandinavian countries. We will be speaking to the Australians in greater depth in the next few days. The eyewitnesses are also lobbying delegates.

6. We are in a difficult position because the main focus of this Commission is Asia. The countries under discussion are East Timor, Cambodia, Iraq, Iran, Burma, Sri Lanka and Tibet. The Commission will not adopt resolutions on more than two of them, so we are in the unenviable position of virtually "competing" with these other issues in the region.

7. We have encountered a problem with the decision to send a Special Envoy of the Secretary-General to Indonesia. Amos Wako (the Kenyan Attorney-General) left last Saturday and is due to return this weekend. His mandate is unclear, and at best he would have spent only a day or so in East Timor. We communicated what information we could to his party before his departure. The problem his trip presents is twofold.

: Firstly, his trip could give the impression that action on East Timor is already in train, so attention may be diverted from the issue here at the Commission.

: Secondly, many countries have indicated that they will await the outcome of Wako's trip before making a commitment either way on East Timor. This is of some concern to us because it legitimates the delaying tactics by some governments. We are therefore doing our best to counter this.

8. Portugal, Australia and Indonesia have all spoken.

: Portugal made a strong speech rejecting the Indonesian Inquiry, posing pertinent questions, and calling for an international investigation and a long-term solution to the future of East Timor.

: Australia did not specifically mention Indonesia or East Timor.

: Indonesia strongly attacked Portugal. They acknowledged the massacre and expressed their regret for it. They also expressed their desire to cooperate with the international community in their effort to combat human rights abuses in Indonesia. This indicates a subtle new strategy of clever diplomacy on their behalf, which we will be closely monitoring.

9. Koojiman presented his report to the Commission. He did not specifically refer to East Timor in his presentation, but he did thank Indonesia for the invitation to investigate.

10. Alan Nairn, Amy Goodman, Russell Anderson and Saskia Kowenberg are all in Geneva. Alan and Amy addressed the Commission, and were well received. The Portuguese presented a showing of the video of the massacre at which Alan and Amy provided commentary.

11. There has been some media coverage of East Timor, namely in a large Swiss daily (interview with me) and by French Swiss TV (interview with me, Amy and Allan plus showing footage of the

massacre). The Independent carried a major story on Aceh. See enclosure. A Press Conference for Swiss media will be held this morning and a Press briefing for UN Correspondents will be held this afternoon.

12. I'll speak under item 12 on 20 Feb. Vote will take place 3 March.

13. ICJ will issue its own report on East Timor next week and will host a luncheon where I'll speak.

14. We have the support of many NGO's that are lobbying on our behalf - this is very important to our work.

Conclusions

: The Commission is still at an early stage, so we have some time on our side in which to maximize our lobby.

: It is clear that major players in the Western Group like the U.S. do not want a strong resolution on East Timor, and that Australia and the U.S. in particular will continue to lobby on this point.

: Most Asian countries will vote with Indonesia.

: Portugal is strongly stating its position that there be negotiations without preconditions involving the East Timorese under UN auspices. In doing so, they are acknowledging their responsibility as the formally recognized Administering Power of East Timor, and asking for the right to complete the process of decolonization in accordance with UN procedures. This could prove to be an important policy shift, particularly as Portugal holds the Presidency of the EC at the moment.

: The vote on East Timor will take place on a draft which will either be an acceptable compromise to us, or if defeated, the Portuguese have stated that they will break with the EC and go alone.

Subject: _____